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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Washington, DC) – *Today, the House of Representatives passed the Medical Debt Relief Act (H.R. 3421), which would expunge paid-off medical debts from consumer credit reports. The Medical Debt Relief Act was introduced by Rep. Mary Jo Kilroy (D-OH) on July 30, 2009 and has 107 co-sponsors, including Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL). It would help American families whose credit reports have been damaged by medical debts, but who have since paid them off. Credit reports, used in a variety of ways in the modern day economy, can prevent people from getting jobs or otherwise impede a family's ability to support itself. As Chairman of the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit, Rep. Gutierrez has chaired three hearings this year on the use and impact of credit information on consumers and recently held a town hall meeting in Chicago on the use of credit reports for employment purposes.*

The following is a statement by Rep. Gutierrez:

"Medical debt affects millions of hard-working Americans who have their lives and financial histories turned upside down because a catastrophic health problem or an insurance company decision puts them in the hole. Then, for years after they have paid off the debt, they still pay the price on their credit reports. We started to put an end to that today. I applaud Representative Kilroy for her perseverance in pursuing this vital legislation and I call on the Senate to act expeditiously so that this important bill becomes the law of the land as soon as possible."

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